



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

Religious Studies

RSS04

Religion, Philosophy and Science

AS Unit D

Final

Mark Scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

| Level | AS Descriptor AO1 | Marks | AS Descriptor AO2 | Marks | AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2 |
|-------|---|-------|--|-------|--|
| 7 | A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples | 28-30 | A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument. | 14-15 | Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar. |
| 6 | A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s) | 24-27 | A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument. There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning. | 12-13 | |
| 5 | A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s). | 20-23 | A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained. | 10-11 | Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar. |
| 4 | A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence. | 15-19 | A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained. | 7-9 | Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning. |
| 3 | A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence. | 10-14 | A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence. | 5-6 | |
| 2 | A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question. | 5-9 | A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning. | 3-4 | Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear. |
| 1 | Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question. | 1-4 | A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification. | 1-2 | |
| 0 | Nothing of relevance. | 0 | No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance. | 0 | |

RSS04: Religion, Philosophy and Science

Question 1 Miracles

01 Explain Hume's arguments against miracles.

Argument from testimony: wise man proportions beliefs to the evidence. Necessary to test both the credibility of the witness and the reliability of the evidence. Only if not believing in a miracle turned out to be more miraculous would it be possible to accept the testimony of a miracle.

Secondary arguments: not enough men of good sense have borne witness to a miracle; miracles often happen in ignorant and barbarous nations; miracles happen in different religions so they cancel each other out; people have a pre-disposition to believe what is marvellous.

NB Candidates must use arguments (plural).

MAX Level 5 if only one addressed.

(30 marks) AO1

02 Assess the claim that Hume's arguments against miracles are entirely irrelevant to religious believers.

Are entirely irrelevant

Miracles are carriers of religious meaning or signs of God's presence. Many are attested by doctors and scientists (e.g. at Lourdes) and many lead to changed lives for the better.

The importance of miracles lies in their personal significance and not in the analysis of empirical data.

Are not entirely irrelevant

Hume right to challenge testimony especially since people do often want to believe in the miraculous. Miracles are not consistent with a theistic God and should be treated with suspicion by believers and atheists alike.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 2 Creation

03 Explain what religious believers mean when they say that God is the creator.

Allow for a wide variety of different understandings from creationism to liberal views. Candidates may use Genesis and talk about the different understandings of the text. Other may talk about God sustaining creation and how this may tie in with the scientific views. Yet others may talk about the cosmological argument and take a more philosophical view.

(30 marks) AO1

04 'To claim that God is the creator is to ignore modern science.'
Assess this claim.

Does ignore

Easiest to argue this from the creationist viewpoint where the conflict between a literal understanding of the text and science is at its most obvious.

There may also be the point that scientific understandings of creation rely on evidence whereas religious views rest on faith.

Does not ignore

Many theists are comfortable with the combination of both scientific and religious understandings of creation and see no problem with both. Modern religious understandings have taken Big Bang theory and evolution into account e.g. the work of Polkinghorne, de Chardin etc.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 3 The design argument

05 Explain the design argument as presented by Aquinas and by Paley.

Aquinas – archer analogy together with the notion that each element of creation has an end.

Paley – watchmaker analogy together with the examples of the eye and the movement of the planets.

NB To score higher levels, candidates must make full use of the argument from analogy.

MAX L5 (23) if only one argument tackled, however well.

(30 marks) AO1

06 'The design argument lacks credibility in the 21st century.'
How far do you agree?

Does lack credibility

In the light of modern science (especially evolution) and the alternative understandings it offers for design, there is no need to posit the existence of a Designer.

Does not lack credibility

Modern forms of the design argument do allow for the process of evolution (e.g. Swinburne and Tennant) and accept that design is a natural consequence of that process. Evolution does not explain everything, however, and there is a need for an ultimate explanation for the design and happy circumstance in nature.

Better answers may consider what the word 'credibility' might mean.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 4 Quantum mechanics and a religious world view

07 Explain key ideas in the world view of quantum mechanics.

Expect the elements from the specification:

- Quanta: energy can come in the form of little ‘packets’ rather than just in waves and this discovery changed the way scientists viewed the behaviour of matter in the universe;
- the behaviour of the electron: the way that the electron is viewed is intimately linked with the way it is measured and certain experiments will determine how the electron behaves;
- wave-particle duality of light: light can be seen to have a dual nature: wave-like and particulate which challenges how scientists understand the nature of the universe and their role in observing it.
- the role of the observer: the scientist can no longer stand apart from the process of the experiment but must accept that his involvement will shape the outcome of the experiment itself.

Some candidates may include discussion of Heisenburg and Schrodinger.

MAX L4 if only one idea is considered.

(30 marks)

AO1

**08 ‘Quantum mechanics makes it possible for science to be religious’.
Assess this claim.**

Does make it possible

Religion is a human journey to finding meaning. It can be about the discovery of the underlying unity and order within the universe. Quantum mechanics makes scientists realise that science too is a human journey to find meaning and that in some respects it relies on elements of faith and trust that this meaning is there to find.

Does not make it possible

The two disciplines are entirely different in their aim and in their methodology. Science is still driven by the testing of empirical data through experimentation whilst religion is concerned with metaphysical questions.

(15 marks)

AO2

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